

Sunset Confidential: Part 1

Background on an Over-Night Success

There's a cute, yet very accurate, saying in Hollywood: "They became an over-night success ... Ten years later." Accurate because, like nearly every specialty or business, it takes hard work and tenacity to succeed in Hollywood. Allow me to explain using two good friends, Robert Arevalo and Skip Fredricks, as examples:

Robert Arevalo is an actor. You've probably viscerally enjoyed watching him die, horribly, in several Robert Rodriguez and other movies. An excellent actor, you want to cheer when his character meets a well-deserved end. He's a large, fit martial arts expert. Always smiling and soft spoken, he's the nicest guy you would ever want to meet off-screen.



Like every other accomplished Hollywood actor and writer, Robert has a "day job." A little known trick for meeting a real Hollywood actor on your visit to Hollywood is sitting down for a meal and speaking to your server. Many a successful actor has waited their fair share of tables. Take a Selfie with your server and then wait a few years. Instead of waiting tables, Robert is a licensed bounty hunter. That, thought Gabriel Reyes, Robert's publicist, was a great story waiting to be told. When I asked, "Bounty Hunter?" Actors are known for being emotional, kinder, gentler souls. "How do you deal with that schizophrenia?" Robert just grinned and I was somehow reminded by this particular grin that he is a martial arts expert. Albeit, Robert comes across warm and fuzzy, trust me, you very much don't want to test him.

"First of all, I've always been into action movies: Stallone and Schwarzenegger. Actually, I started learning how to write and direct because of Stallone's advice. I walked out with him and his brother after a workout one day. I just asked Stallone if he could impart some advice. Stallone smiled, laughed and he just told me, 'Look-it, if you want to make it in this business create your own opportunities. When I first came to Hollywood, I couldn't get arrested in this town.'" If you ask, Robert will tell you that he constantly hones his acting craft and writing skills along with his physical strength and agility.



Skip came to entertainment from another direction; he was an athlete and World Cup Jetski champion until his Jetski was T-Boned by a celebrity during a charity race. While the collision left almost every bone fractured, Skip and the celebrity remained friends.

His Jetski career over, Skip wouldn't remain down. He pursued both ESPN and Fox Sports about Sporting Show concepts from a competitor's perspective. Prime Network said absolutely, after ESPN passed, and asked for a treatment.

Skip, who had no prior formal training, immediately began attending seminars and voraciously reading everything he could find on television production. His treatment so impressed the network executives, that within six short months, Skip had a pilot followed by a pick-up for a first-of-its-kind new concept, an 'On-the-Road' reality series called *Beach Extreme*; which became the most watched series on the network. If you want to know who is responsible for getting networks to think about reality programming, blame Skip.

Ten years later, Skip and Robert are about to become over-night successes. JEFF FISHMAN



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